## ACCESSIBILITY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD

Purpose

Recognizing the history of discrimination against persons with disabilities in Ontario, the purpose of this Act is to benefit all Ontarians by:

❖ Developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards in order to achieve accessibility for Ontarians with disabilities with respect to goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025, and

❖ Providing for the involvement of persons with disabilities, of the Government of Ontario and of representatives of industries and of various sectors of the economy in the development of the accessibility standards.

MLCP is committed to providing customer service in a manner that, as much as reasonably possible, respects an individual's dignity, independence, integration and equality of opportunity, including, for those with disabilities.  In its ongoing efforts to strive for accessibility, the school endorses the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the regulations supporting this Act.  This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and agents of the MLCP who interact with our customers, be they current and prospective students, current, prospective and past parents/grandparents, alumnae, and donors.  (See Attached Best Practices & Guidelines For Implementation Of The Customer Service Standard - Accessibility Policy)

MLCP acknowledges and supports the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and specifically the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, Ontario Regulation 429/07.  People with disabilities, visible or invisible, are to be given the same opportunity as others to obtain and benefit from services offered by the school.  Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that services offered by MLCP are provided in such a way that the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities are respected in the following areas:

## Communication

MLCP will communicate to people with disabilities in ways that take into account their specific needs in communicating.

MLCP will train its staff and volunteers on how to interact and communicate with our diverse community and people with diverse disabilities with more specific training when the need arises i.e. large print, recorded audio, electronic format, braille, etc.

## Telephone Services

MLCP is committed to providing fully accessible telephone service to all registered families.

MLCP will train its staff and volunteers to communicate over the telephone in whatever means necessary to serve the individual needs of the family/staff/volunteer.

## Assistive Devices

MLCP is committed to service people with diverse disabilities who use assistive devices to obtain, use or benefit from our services. MLCP will ensure that its employees and volunteers are aware of and trained in the use of various assistive devices, for those with disabilities while accessing its services.

## Billing

MLCP is committed to providing accessible invoices to all its customers. For this reason, invoices will be provided in alternative formats, upon request or as needed.

## Use of Service Animals

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a guide dog or other service animal, MLCP will ensure that the person is permitted to enter school premises and to keep the animal with him or her (unless the animal is otherwise excluded by law from the premises). Service animals should have corresponding paperwork identifying them as such. While visiting MLCP, it is the responsibility of the person with a service animal to control the animal at all times.

If a service animal is excluded by law from school premises, MLCP will ensure that other measures within our capabilities are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the school's services.

In the event a staff member or student is allergic to the animal, alternative arrangements within our capabilities will be negotiated.

## Use of Support Person

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, MLCP will ensure that both persons are permitted to enter school premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises. Comments, questions, etc. should be directed to the person requesting information, where possible, NOT to the support staff.

MLCP may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while on school premises, in situations where it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the person with a disability, or the health and safety of others on the school premises.

Consent from the person with a disability is required when communicating private issues related to the person with a disability, in the presence of a support person.

For those school events where admission fees apply, these fees will be waived for support persons.  MLCP will ensure that notice is given in advance of relevant events or activities that admission fees will be waived for support persons.

## Notice of Temporary Disruption

MLCP will make reasonable effort to provide customers with notice in the event of a disruption in the facilities or services usually used by people with disabilities.  This notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.  MLCP may not be able to give adequate notice in case of an emergency temporary disruption.  Every effort will be made, in unforeseen situations, to assist everyone in an emergency evacuation or disruption of service.

In order to make information accessible, the signs and printed notices of sufficient size that are easily readable will be prepared.

The signs and printed notices will be displayed prominently at the entrance to the school, on notice-boards and at service desks.

Telephone messages will be left in clear and concise language as needed by an individual.

## Training for Staff

MLCP will ensure that all persons to whom this policy applies receive training as required by the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation.  Training will be provided to MLCP employees as part of orientation training for new employees as necessary.  Training will also be provided on an ongoing basis in connection with changes to the policies and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to persons with disabilities.

MLCP will ensure that the following persons receive training about the provisions of services to persons with disabilities:

❖ Every person who deals with members of the public or other third parties on behalf of MLCP, whether the person does so as an employee, volunteer or otherwise; and

❖ Every person who participates in developing MLCP's policies, practices and procedures governing the provision of goods and services to members of the public.

❖ Training will include, as necessary, how to interact and communicate respectfully, how to manage assistive devices or service animals and what to do if there is difficulty assessing services.

The training will include a review of the purposes of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005,* and the requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation.

The amount and format of training will depend on the person's interaction with customers.

A record of training received by staff and volunteers will be kept by the Principal.

## Feedback Process

MLCP welcomes feedback, including feedback about the delivery of services to persons with disabilities. Users can submit feedback to any member of school or classroom administration, and it will be forwarded to the appropriate person.

## Integrated Accessibility Standards

Montessori Learning Centre of Pickering ("MLCP") is committed to meeting the accessibility needs of people with disabilities in a timely manner. In that regard, MLCP has established an accessibility policy and a multi-year accessibility plan to meet its obligations under Regulation 191/11, "Integrated Accessibility Standards" ("Regulation") under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.

The MLCP vision for accessibility is that people with disabilities, visible or invisible, are given the same opportunity as others to obtain and benefit from services offered by MLCP. MLCP's goal is to make reasonable efforts to provide services in such a way that the key principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for persons with disabilities are respected.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and agents of MLCP who interact with our school community, including current and prospective students, current, prospective and past parents/grandparents, alumnae, donors and other users of our services.

Below is a list of definitions in alphabetical order used in this policy, as set out in the Regulation:

**Accessible Formats** may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

**Communications** means the interaction between two or more persons or entities, or any combination of them, where information is provided, sent or received.

**Communication Supports** may include, but are not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language and other supports that facilitate effective communications that are within our capabilities.

**Information** includes data, facts and knowledge that exists in any format, including text, audio, digital or images, and that conveys meaning.

**Internet Website** means a collection of related web pages, images, videos or other digital assets that are addressed relative to a common Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) and is accessible to the public.

**New Internet Website** means either a website with a new domain name or a website with an existing domain name undergoing a significant refresh.

**Redeployment** means the reassignment of employees to other departments or jobs within the organization as an alternative to layoff where ever possible, when a particular job or department has been eliminated.

**Unconvertible** means if it is not technically feasible to convert the information or communications. It also means if the technology to convert the information or communications is not readily available.

**Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** means the World Wide Web consortium recommendation, dated December 2008, entitled "Web Content Accessibility Guidelines" (WCAG) 2.0.

## Integrated Multi-Year Accessibility Plan

The Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines a phased-in strategy to prevent and remove barriers and meet its requirements under the Regulation. MLCP will continue to work towards meeting the requirements as per the time line. This plan will be reviewed every 5 years or as necessary (2022).

## Training

MLCP will ensure that training and updates are provided to all employees, and volunteers, and all persons who participate in developing MLCP's polices, on the requirements of the accessibility standards referred to in the Regulation and on the *Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities, as needed and most specifically for individuals visiting or attending the school. MLCP shall maintain a record of the dates when training was provided and the number of individuals to whom it was provided.

## Information and Communications Standard

**Feedback Processes** - MLCP will ensure that its processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and with communication supports upon request. Feedback

can take the form of verbal, written or electronic.  MLCP will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports as needed.

**Accessible Formats and Communication Supports** - MLCP will, upon request, within their capabilities provide or arrange for accessible formats and communication supports for persons with disabilities as follows:

❖ In a timely manner that takes into account the person's accessibility needs due to a disability;
❖ At a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged to other persons;
❖ Consult with the person making the request and determine suitability of an accessible format or communication support as needed;
❖ Notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports as needed.

## Employment Standard

**Recruitment** – As per the Employment Standards Act, MLCP will notify employees and the public, as needed, about the availability of accommodations for applicants and employees, as the case may be with disabilities as follows:

❖ In its recruitment processes;
❖ During the recruitment process, when job applicants are individually selected to participate in an assessment or selection process;
❖ If a selected applicant requests an accommodation, MLCP will consult with the applicant and provide or arrange for the provision of a suitable accommodation in a manner that takes into account the applicant's accessibility needs due to disability;
❖ When making offers of employment to a successful applicant.

**Employee Notification** - MLCP shall inform its employees of its policies used to support its employees with disabilities, including but not limited to, policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability. Such information will be provided as follows:

❖ To new employees as soon as practicable after they begin their employment;
❖ To existing employees whenever there is a change to existing policies on the provision of job accommodations that take into account an employee's accessibility needs due to a disability.

**Accessible Formats and Communication Supports** - Upon request by an employee with a disability, MLCP will consult with the individual to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports within their capabilities for:

❖ Information that is needed in order to perform the employee's job; and

❖ Information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

MLCP will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

**Individual Accommodation Plan (IAP)** - MLCP will develop and have in place a written process for developing a documented individual accommodation plan for employees with a disability. The process will include the following elements:

❖ The manner in which an employee requesting accommodation can participate in the development of the individual accommodation plan.
❖ The means by which the employee is assessed on an individual basis.
❖ The manner in which the employer can request an evaluation by an outside medical or other expert, at the employer's expense, to assist the employer in determining if accommodation can be achieved and, if so, how accommodation can be achieved.
❖ The manner in which the employee can request the participation of a representative from their bargaining agent, where the employee is represented by a bargaining agent, or other representative from the workplace, where the employee is not represented by a bargaining agent, in the development of the accommodation plan.
❖ The steps taken to protect the privacy of the employee's personal information.
❖ The frequency with which the individual accommodation plan will be reviewed and updated and the manner in which it will be done.
❖ If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the manner in which the reasons for the denial will be provided to the employee.
❖ The means of providing the individual accommodation plan in a format that takes into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

**Return to Work** - MLCP will have in place a return to work process for employees who have been absent from work due to a disability and require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.  Such processes shall be documented as the need arises and will outline the steps that MLCP will take to facilitate the return to work and include an individual accommodation plan.

**Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement and Redeployment** - MLCP will take into account the accommodation needs and/or individual accommodation plans of employees.

**Workplace Emergency Response Information** - MLCP shall provide individualized workplace emergency response information to employees who have a disability in accordance with the following elements:

❖ If the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;

❖ If the employee who receives an individual workplace emergency response information requires assistance and with the employee's consent, MLCP shall provide the workplace emergency information to the person designated by MLCP to provide assistance to the employee;

❖ As soon as practicable after becoming aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability;

❖ Review the individualized workplace emergency response information when the employee moves to a different location in the organization, when overall accommodations needs or plans are reviewed and when MLCP reviews its general emergency response policies.

## BEST PRACTICES AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
## CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARD - ACCESSIBILITY POLICY

Montessori Learning Centre of Pickering ("MLCP") is committed to offering its services in ways that respect the dignity and independence of people with disabilities, and strives to allow people with disabilities to obtain the same services, in the same places and in similar ways as other customers. The following best practices and guidelines may assist in providing excellent customer service, while taking into account a person's disability.

There are a wide variety of disabilities and responding in the most appropriate manner to each person with a disability always requires common sense, patience, respect and a genuine willingness to find the best way to help when serving a person with a disability.

## Definitions

**Assistive Device**:  Any device used by people with disabilities to help increase, maintain or improve how a person with a disability can function. Such devices may include, but are not limited to, wheelchairs, walkers, white canes, oxygen tanks, electronic communication devices, elevators, ramps, stair lift etc.

**Customer**:  Any person who uses the goods and services of the school, including students, parents and other members of the school community.

**Disability**:  As defined in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*, section 2, means (a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness; (b) a condition of mental impairment or developmental disability; (c) a learning disability or a dysfunction on one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language; (d) a mental disorder, or; (e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

**Dignity**:  Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to maintain self-respect and the respect of others.

**Equal Opportunity**:  Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability access to goods and service at the same level given to others.

**Independence**:  Allows the person with a disability to do things on their own without unnecessary interference from others.

**Integration**:  Refers to service which is provided in a way that allows the person with a disability to benefit from the same services, in the same place, and in the same or similar manner as other customers, unless an alternate measure is necessary to enable the person with the disability to access the goods or services.

**Service Animal**:  An animal is a service animal for a person with a disability if it is readily apparent that the animal is used by the person for reasons relating to help with his or her disability; or if the person provides a letter from a doctor or nurse confirming that the person needs the animal to help with his or her disability.

**Support Person**:  A person who assists a person with a disability with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs as they access the services of the school.  A support person is distinct from an employee who supports a student in the system.

## Communication

In all instances take your cues from the person with the disability – do not assume what they can or cannot do, be patient, give the person your full attention and always respect any specific directions that they provide with regard to how best to meet their own specific needs.

Communicate with a person with a disability in manner that takes their specific disability into account. Where possible, ask the person directly how to best communicate with them – this may include using alternate formats such as notes, large print, CD or use of Braille.  Staff should speak clearly and directly and be prepared to offer alternative modes of communication, for example pen and paper, internet and to offer to read a document should this be required.  The use of appropriate language is critical for persons with disabilities.

Always attract someone's attention before speaking to them. One way to achieve this may be a gentle touch on the shoulder or gently waving your hand. Speak directly to the person with the disability, not their support person. Excellent communication may also require that you step around a counter or desk to provide service to someone with a physical disability. Some instances may require that you speak very slowly, use clear language and attempt to restrict your questions to yes or no answers, where possible.

Never touch a person who has a disability, such as a vision or hearing disability, without obtaining permission first, unless it is an emergency. You can, however, offer to guide a person, if appropriate, by offering your arm. Again, take your cues from the person with the disability – they are best able to advise you of the most appropriate way to provide them assistance.

## Assistive Devices

The Office should inform our staff/students/parents/volunteers of the assistive devices MLCP currently has in place. Magnifying glasses are also considered assistive devices. Individuals may also bring their own assistive devices on the premises. Staff should not interfere with the assistive device without permission of the individual. MLCP will maintain its ramps, wheelchairs and elevators.

If barriers to the use of an assistive device exist at any premises, these barriers, where reasonably possible, will be removed.

## Service Animals

Services animals are allowed to go with any person with a disability while they are obtaining services from the school. Where the animal is not allowed by law, other options should be explored. For example, if a guide dog is not allowed in a particular area, someone with low vision or no vision might need a person to guide them while the dog waits in another location. Another option would be to provide the service in another part of the premises. At all times, solutions and options should be discussed with the customer.

As per the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, section 59(e)(ii) of Ontario Regulation 562 does not allow animals in places where food is manufactured, prepared, processed, handled, served, displayed, stored, sold or offered for sale. However, section 60 of Ontario Regulation 562 does allow a service dog serving as a guide for a blind person or for a person with another medical disability who requires the use of a service dog to go into places where food is served, sold or offered for sale. Other types of service animals are not included in this exception. Staff may offer suitable alternative arrangements if the animal is prohibited by law.

A number of animals serve as service animals. These can include pigs and snakes. If you are in doubt as to whether an animal is in fact a service animal there are three types of acceptable supporting documentation:

❖ A letter from a physician or nurse confirming that the person requires the animal for reasons related to the disability;

❖ A valid identification card signed by the Attorney General of Canada; or

❖ A certificate of training from a recognized guide dog or service animal training school.

If a conflict arises as a result of an allergy that staff or student may have to the service animal, it is up the Principal or member of school administration to work out a solution.

Do not interact with a service animal without the permission of the owner/user as these are working animals not pets. Do however, assist in providing water upon request and show the user/handler an outdoor area suitable for the animal's needs. The owner/user of the service animal is responsible for maintaining care and control of the animal at all times.

## Support Persons

Support persons are allowed to go with any person with a disability while they are obtaining services from the school. Some services, such as meetings with regard to students, should be considered private and confidential. If a person with a disability uses a support person and is attending a confidential meeting or interview, the person with the disability may need to provide permission for the support person to attend. This permission should be documented in writing.

Always direct your attention to the person with the disability, rather than the support person. It is best practice to take your cues from the person with the disability to understand how to best meet their needs.

## Training for Staff

Training for MLCP staff will focus on the following areas:

❖ The purpose of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*.
❖ The requirements of the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/08).
❖ Information about MLCP policies, procedures, and guidelines pertaining to the provision of services to users with disabilities.
❖ How to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities.
❖ How to interact with people with disabilities who use assistive devices or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person.
❖ How to use equipment or devices available on MLCP premises or otherwise provided by the school that may help with the provision of services to a person with a disability.
❖ What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the school's services.

Date Established: August 2015
Date Updated: December 2020

# INDIVIDUALIZED ACCOMODATION PLAN (IAP)
## (CONFIDENTIAL WHEN COMPLETED)

MLCP is committed to accommodating people with disabilities and will use the following process to identify, implement and meet an individual accommodation plan for staff, students, parents, volunteers, and interns. MLCP recognizes the need for accommodation as requested by the individual or individuals' parent/guardian and/or identified by MLCP in a format that takes into account the individual's accessibility needs due to disability. MLCP encourages active participation by the individual. Information will be collected on the individual's functional abilities, not the nature of the disability and the individual's personal information, including medical information, is kept secure and dealt with in a confidential manner - only being disclosed to individuals who need it to perform the accommodation process. The individual and his/her teacher/staff manager will work together to find the most appropriate accommodation. A medical or other expert may be engaged (at MLCP's expense) to help determine if/how the individual's needs can be accommodated. If the individual is an employee, they may ask a bargaining agent or other workplace representative to participate in the process. If an individual accommodation plan is denied, the reasons for the denial will be provided in writing to the individual.

**IAP Plan For (Name):**

**Date of Birth:**
(dd/mm/yyyy)

**Class:**

**Accommodations:**

Start Date:
(dd/mm/yyyy)

End Date:
(dd/mm/yyyy)

**Next Plan Review:**

Date:
(dd/mm/yyyy)

Or

Frequency:

---

**Limitations:** *[List any functional limitations that the individual experiences, how it affects different aspects of his/her task/activity and if each task/activity is an essential part of the role.]*

Limitation(s):

Tasks/Activities Affected:

Essential Job Requirement:                Yes                No

---

**Accommodations:** *[Using the list of task/activities from the limitations section above, identify what types of accommodation or support would help the individual accomplish the task. List a strategy or tool that will provide that accommodation.]*

Task(s)/Activity(ies):

What must the accommodation achieve?

Accommodation Strategy:

---

**Implementation:** *[List the actions required to achieve the accommodation(s) identified in the prior section.]*

Action:

Assigned to:

Due Date (dd/mm/yyyy)                Date Completed (dd/mm/yyyy)

Date Established:  December 2017
Date Updated:  December 2020

**Montessori Learning Centre of Pickering**

---

**Information Sources:** *[Identify and include the contact information for any experts consulted when building the plan (e.g. MLCP manager, family doctor, specialists).]*

Name:

Title/Role:

Email Address:                                    Telephone Number:

---

**Related Documents:** *[Attach any additional documents required to support the individual.]*

Individual's Emergency Plan *[If Applicable]*

Return to Work Plan *[If Applicable]*

Accessible format of the Individual Accommodation Plan *[If Needed]*

What type(s) of accessible formats and/or communications support the individual's needs *[If Requested]*

Other *[Specify]*

---

**Comments/Notes:** *[Use this section for any additional information (e.g. details of alternative work arrangements, budget code for accommodation costs, etc).]*

---

**Parent/Guardian/IAP Individual's Signature:**

| **Print name:** | **Relationship to child:** *[If Applicable]* |
|---|---|
| **Signature:** | **Date:** (dd/mm/yyyy) |

---

The following individuals participated in the development of this IAP:

| **First and Last Name:** | **Position/Role:** | **Signature:** |
|---|---|---|
| **First and Last Name:** | **Position/Role:** | **Signature:** |
| **First and Last Name:** | **Position/Role:** | **Signature:** |

Date Established: December 2017
Date Updated: December 2020